

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 102

May 1, 1996, 7:15 p.m.
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ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION/Deeming Exemption for the Newly Disabled

SUBJECT: Immigration Control and Financial Responsibility Act of 1996 . . . S. 1664. Simon amendment No. 3810 to the Dole (for Simpson) amendment No. 3743.

ACTION: AMENDMENT REJECTED, 30-69

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1664, the Immigration Control and Financial Responsibility Act of 1996, will address the issue of illegal immigration: by increasing the number of Border Patrol and investigative personnel; by establishing pilot programs to improve the system used by employers to verify citizenship or work-authorized alien status; by increasing penalties for alien smuggling and document fraud; by reforming asylum, exclusion, and deportation laws and procedures; and by reducing the use of welfare by aliens.

The Dole (for Simpson) perfecting amendment to the bill would strike all after the first word and would insert the text of the bill, as amended, with one technical change.

The Simon amendment would exempt legal immigrants from the deeming requirement if they became blind or disabled after entering the United States. (The deeming requirement in this bill will require the income and resources of an immigrant's sponsor to be deemed to be the immigrant's income and resources when determining that immigrant's eligibility for needs-based benefits.) The amendment would use the Social Security Program's definitions for "blind" and "disabled".

Those favoring the amendment contended:

This bill requires the income of a sponsor to be deemed the income of a legal immigrant when determining eligibility for needs-based benefits. Sponsors in good faith often promise to support immigrants, but when those immigrants get here they become blind or disabled. Those sponsors suddenly find that the expense of meeting those immigrants' needs is much greater than anticipated. They cannot afford to provide care, and under this bill those immigrants will not be allowed to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or any other needed benefits. This refusal to provide care is neither practical nor compassionate. Therefore, the Simon

(See other side)

YEAS (30)			NAYS (69)			NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (1 or 2%)	Democrats (29 or 62%)		Republicans (51 or 98%)	Democrats (18 or 38%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
Jeffords	Akaka	Kerry	Abraham	Hatfield	Baucus	Kassebaum- ²	
	Breaux	Lautenberg	Ashcroft	Helms	Biden		
	Bumpers	Leahy	Bennett	Hutchison	Bingaman		
	Conrad	Levin	Bond	Inhofe	Boxer		
	Daschle	Lieberman	Brown	Kempthorne	Bradley		
	Dodd	Mikulski	Burns	Kyl	Bryan		
	Dorgan	Moseley-Braun	Campbell	Lott	Byrd		
	Feingold	Moynihan	Chafee	Lugar	Exon		
	Graham	Murray	Coats	Mack	Feinstein		
	Harkin	Pell	Cochran	McCain	Ford		
	Hollings	Rockefeller	Cohen	McConnell	Glenn	EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: 1—Official Buisiness 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other	
	Inouye	Sarbanes	Coverdell	Murkowski	Heflin		
	Kennedy	Simon	Craig	Nickles	Johnston		
	Kerrey	Wellstone	D'Amato	Pressler	Kohl		
		Wyden	DeWine	Roth	Nunn		
			Dole	Santorum	Pryor		
			Domenici	Shelby	Reid		
			Faircloth	Simpson	Robb		
			Frist	Smith			
			Gorton	Snowe			
			Gramm	Specter		SYMBOLS: AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
			Grams	Stevens			
			Grassley	Thomas			
			Gregg	Thompson			
			Hatch	Thurmond			
				Warner			

amendment would allow immigrants who became disabled or blind after entering the country to receive welfare benefits without regard to their sponsors' income. This amendment should not be too burdensome, because it would not apply to immigrants who were already blind or disabled when they arrived, and because it is difficult to meet the definitions for blind or disabled that the Simon amendment would use. We are pleased to support this amendment.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

We are going around and around on this issue. Sponsors of immigrants sign affidavits of support saying that they will not allow those immigrants to become public charges. To the extent that they are able, sponsors should be held to those promises. They should have to give assistance for medical services, schooling, and food, and they should have to give assistance to immigrants they have sponsored if they are children, veterans, and pregnant women. We have already had votes on those issues. Now we are being asked to vote on whether they should have to keep their promises when the immigrants they have sponsored become disabled. The answer is yes. The taxpayers should not be made to foot the bill to pay for an immigrant's care if that immigrant has a sponsor who has promised that he or she will provide any needed help. We do not ask sponsors to sign an affidavit of support saying that they will provide help unless it is really needed. Under this bill, a sponsor must provide support if at all possible. If a sponsor is broke, then an immigrant can sign up for welfare. As for the claim that has been made that it is difficult to qualify for SSI, we note that the number of "disabled immigrants" who are on SSI has increased by 825 percent over the last 15 years. SSI has become the most abused welfare program in America, and immigrants have been more guilty than American citizens. We are not about to approve a proposal saying that immigrants will no longer be allowed to abuse welfare programs except for the program that they are most abusing. We therefore urge the rejection of this amendment.